



2015-2016 Risk Management Series

Hazing + Bullying Toolkit

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What is Hazing?

“Hazing” refers to any activity expected of someone joining a group (or to maintain full status in a group) that humiliates, degrades or risks emotional and/or physical harm, regardless of the person’s willingness to participate.

Within the context of fraternities and sororities, it encompasses an extensive range of behaviors and activities, ranging from seemingly innocuous activities such as blindfolding and scavenger hunts, to more dangerous and extreme physical punishments, including sleep deprivation and excessive exercise.

Team building/initiation “type” activities can be a good thing and very beneficial. They should be serious and challenging, help the person find an identity in a group of athletes and give them a sense of belonging. These types of activities, however, are different from hazing in very fundamental ways. Without careful consideration, they can too often degenerate into hazing where they humiliate, embarrass, degrade or endanger people.

Ask yourself:

- Is there secrecy around the activity?
- Is there pressure to participate?
- Is a specific group or individual singled out?
- Do members justify it as being a “tradition”?
- Does this activity promote and conform to the ideals and values of the team/athletic department/university?
- Will this activity increase long-term feelings of friendship between new and initiated members of the team?
- Take the perspective of your parents – would they be proud? Your Coach? Athletic Director? The University President?
- Would you be willing to defend the merit of this activity in a court of law?
- Does the activity meet both the spirit and letter of the standards prohibiting hazing?

How Hazing is Justified?

Moral Disengagement (*Bandura, 2002*): Gradual disengagement of moral self-sanction. Behavior normally viewed as immoral, even reprehensible, over time becomes more benign, acceptable or worthy in a particular social setting through cognitive restructuring.

Mechanisms:

1. Moral Justification – make it socially worthy (e.g., creating bonds, building unity).
2. Euphemistic labeling – sanitized language of non-responsibility (e.g., “team building”).
3. Advantageous comparison – War analogy – “We’re going to battle.”
4. Displacement of responsibility – “We’re just carrying on tradition”; surreptitious sanctioning (wink and nod); intentionally uninformed – “We don’t have a problem with hazing here,” or “I don’t want to know.”

5. Diffusion of Responsibility – Normative conformity; avoidance of personal responsibility.
6. Disregard/distortion of consequences – Athletes are good at hiding pain, physical, emotional, or otherwise.
7. Dehumanization – Perception of freshmen as “less than”; use of masks, costumes, etc.
8. Attribution of Blame – Blame the victim – “They agreed to it.”

Hazing is a complex social problem with no “easy answers.” However, we must not forget that every individual has an important role to play in helping to solve the problem of hazing. Each individual action can make a difference. Together, we can continue to build awareness and develop effective intervention and prevention strategies to eliminate harmful hazing!

Action Steps to Combat Hazing

Eradicating hazing can seem like an overwhelming undertaking, but it’s important to remember that every individual can play an important role in making positive change. Consider the following steps as a guide for thinking about how you can help make change:

Help others to:

1. Notice hazing.
2. Interpret hazing as a problem.
3. Recognize a responsibility to change it.
4. Take action!

According to this model, the most effective way to educate about hazing is to begin by drawing attention to hazing and helping others interpret hazing as a problem.

Remember the adage: “If you’re not part of the solution, you’re part of the problem.” It’s not difficult to become part of the solution.

Other actions steps include:

1. Define up front what is acceptable and what is not acceptable.
2. Ensure the activity that is planned could not be considered, by definition, hazing.
3. Don’t let others justify hazing as “tradition”.
4. **BREAK THE SILENCE** and voice your opinion.
5. Choose to not participate.
6. Speak with chapter members and/or an advisor about your concerns.
7. Come up with new activities that promote team bonding without any risk of it being considered hazing.
8. Get those involved to stop and think about the people they are hazing. Is there any chance hazing could trigger something in terms of personal/ emotional challenges they have had to face in their life.

What is Bullying?

Bullying is a form of emotional or physical abuse that has three defining characteristics:

1. **Deliberate**—a bully's intention is to hurt someone
2. **Repeated**—a bully often targets the same victim again and again
3. **Power Imbalanced**—a bully chooses victims he or she perceives as vulnerable

Bullying occurs in many different forms, with varying levels of severity.

It may involve:

- **Physical Bullying**—pushing, hitting, kicking, beating up
- **Verbal Bullying**—yelling, teasing, name-calling, insulting, threatening to harm
- **Relational Bullying**—ignoring, excluding, spreading rumors, telling lies, getting others to hurt someone

What is Cyberbullying?

Cyberbullying is a growing form of bullying that is especially hard to see.

Cyberbullying involves sending or posting hurtful, embarrassing, or threatening text or images using the Internet, cell phones, or other digital communication devices. Using these technologies, cyberbullies can reach a wide group of people very quickly. Their goal: to damage their victim's reputation and friendships.

Cyberbullying can involve:

- Spreading rumors or posting false or private information
- Getting other people to post or send hurtful messages
- Excluding someone from an online group

Individuals may cyberbully for many reasons. Some do it to deal with their anger, seek revenge, or make themselves appear better than their peers. Others do it for entertainment or for the pleasure of tormenting others. Still others do it simply because they can. By remaining anonymous, and avoiding face-to-face contact, cyberbullies may not realize the consequences of their actions. As a result, they are more likely to say and do things they might hesitate to say or do in person.

Why is Bullying Often Not Reported?

A culture of silence often surrounds bullying. Many individuals who are bullied never tell anyone.

Most bullying is **not** reported because children . . .

- Don't recognize it as bullying
- Are embarrassed
- Don't want to appear weak
- Believe they deserve it
- Want to belong

- Fear retaliation
- Don't know how to talk about it
- Don't have a trusted adult to confide in
- Think adults won't understand
- Think nothing can be done about it

What are Warning Signs of Bullying?

- Unexplained damage or loss of clothing and other personal items
- Evidence of physical abuse, such as bruises and scratches
- Loss of friends; changes in friends
- Reluctance to participate in activities with peers
- Loss of interest in favorite activities
- Unusually sad, moody, anxious, lonely, or depressed
- Problems with eating, sleeping, bed-wetting
- Headaches, stomachaches, or other physical complaints
- Decline in school achievement
- Thoughts of suicide

What Does Bullying Look Like in College?

Preface, an online magazine, sums it up well: “A bully can exist wherever boredom and ignorance are found—those factors are a bully’s motivation.”

When you think of bullying, you might think of a kid getting picked on at the playground, or maybe you imagine a group of middle school girls telling someone they can't sit at the popular table. The images that pop up when we hear the word “bullying” are rarely in the college setting, but just because you aren't in grade school anymore doesn't mean bullying is over.

In many ways, bullying can get harder to deal with in college — you're living out of the house and don't have your family to turn to for support, plus you're already stressed about everything from money to a heavy course load.

According to a Health Day News study in 2012:

- 15 percent of college students studied reported being bullied and nearly 22 percent reported being cases of cyber bullying in college. T
- 38 percent of college students knew someone who was facing cyber bullying in college and about 9 percent said they had done some form of cyber bullying in college on someone else.
- Of those who said they'd been cyberbullied, 25 percent said it was through a social networking site, 21 percent through texting, 16 percent through email and 13 percent through instant messages.
- 42 percent of students said they had seen someone being bullied by another student, 8 percent reported bullying another student, and nearly 15 percent had

seen a professor bully a student and 4 percent said they had been bullied by a professor.

What are some reasons why bullying in college and cyber bullying in college can occur?

- **New targets.** The population of a particular high school may go their separate ways after graduation, requiring those with bullying tendencies to either move on with their lives or find others.
- **Less direct authority.** Students who go away to college are pretty much on their own, without their parents to try to keep order and intervene. Faculty members certainly prefer order in their classes, they're much less interested in interpersonal relationships between students than a high school teacher might be. Resident hall advisors or building managers can be a resource, but may focus more on keeping order or putting on programs. Campus security/law enforcement may want to focus more on stopping violent crime on campus vs. mediating in bullying disputes like one would see in a primary school situation.
- **More time together.** In high school, students stayed together for 8-10 hours in the classroom or gym, and then return to their homes. In college, especially in dormitory settings, students are together morning, noon and night. Roommates are not always put together by choice, which can cause conflict.
- **More pressure.** Academic pressure is higher, plus peer pressure. Too many drinks at a dorm or fraternity party can cause people to focus more of their attention on a 'weird' kid.
- **Same factors:** If a high school bully copes with their own inadequacies and insecurities by tearing down others, both behaviors will be magnified in a new setting. The new college student will likely feel uncomfortable with new classes, new teachers, new peers, and new procedures, and will return to a way of interacting people he or she is familiar with.
- **Electronic resources.** Students can be connected in more ways than ever with Twitter, Facebook and other social networks. This means that even if they aren't even in the same dorm or even town they can still harass someone else. One would like to think that bullies and their victims from high school would not want to deal with each other anymore if they go to different schools, but if the hate remains strong, there isn't much that can stop electronic bullying.
- **More freedom.** People may use the freedom of college to try things that they were unable to in college, such as coming out as homosexual. These decisions, while difficult for the individual, can also attract new attention from new bullies.

Who is Involved in Bullying?

Bullies: select and systematically train their victims to comply with their demands. They seek active encouragement, passive acceptance, or silence from bystanders. **But**, bullies can be stopped when victims and bystanders learn and apply new ways to stand up against bullying.

Victims: reward the bully by yielding control and showing signs of intimidation. They often fail to gain support from bystanders and avoid reporting the bullying. **But**, victims can learn to defeat the bully by responding assertively, rallying support from bystanders, or reporting the bullying

Bystanders: play an important and pivotal role in promoting or preventing bullying. Often without realizing it, they may exacerbate a situation by providing an audience, maintaining silence, actively encouraging, or joining in. **But**, bystanders can neutralize or stop the bullying by aiding the victim, drawing support from other bystanders, or obtaining help.

What if I am the Victim of Bullying?

Bullying can come in the form of a roommate going out of their way to make your life miserable, someone sending you nasty texts, or offensive comments on Facebook photos.

Contacting someone can be a good start, whether it's a counselor or student advisor. Though campus security may not respond to reports of hurt feelings, they may be interested if there are similar reports of rude, unwanted behavior or verbal threats from the same student.

Bullying experts say the same guidelines for bystanders can also apply when it comes to bullying in college – bullies love audiences, and there's often an instinct to either join in or not get involved if you see bullying occur.

But if people are educated as to what constitutes bullying and learn to reach out and treat everyone fairly, then some of it can be minimized. A larger campus, with thousands of people vs. a small high school class, also can be an easier way to not draw attention to bullies or for bullies to not need to strive to be Mr. or Ms. Popular.

College student leaders can also work to reduce the initial insecurities that can fuel behavior of bullying in college and cyber bullying in college. They can create programs to include more students, such as freshman orientation. Or make sure students know about the variety of clubs, sports and activities – the busier they become, the less time they'll have to feel frustrated and angry, which can lead to bullying in college.

Bystander of Bullying

Depending on how bystanders respond, they can either contribute to the problem *or* the solution. Bystanders rarely play a completely neutral role, although they may think they do.

Some bystanders . . . *instigate* the bullying by prodding the bully to begin.

Other bystanders . . . *encourage* the bullying by laughing, cheering, or making comments that further stimulate the bully.

Most bystanders . . . *passively accept* bullying by watching and doing nothing. Often without realizing it, these bystanders also contribute to the problem. Passive bystanders provide the audience a bully craves and the silent acceptance that allows bullies to continue their hurtful behavior.

Why don't more bystanders intervene?

- They think, "It's none of my business."
- They fear getting hurt or becoming another victim.
- They feel powerless to stop the bully.
- They don't like the victim or believe the victim "deserves" it.
- They don't want to draw attention to themselves.
- They fear retribution.
- They don't know what to do.

Bystanders who don't intervene or don't report the bullying often suffer negative consequences themselves. They may experience:

- Pressure to participate in the bullying
- Anxiety about speaking to anyone about the bullying
- Powerlessness to stop bullying
- Vulnerability to becoming victimized
- Guilt for not having defended the victim

How Can I Intervene When Witnessing Bullying?

Bystanders also have the power to play a key role in preventing or stopping bullying.

Direct intervention: by discouraging the bully, defending the victim, or redirecting the situation away from bullying.

Indirect intervention: get help by rallying support from peers to stand up against bullying or by reporting the bullying to an advisor, campus professional, or law enforcement if necessary

4 D's of Bystander Intervention

Direct: Step in directly to intervene- "That is not funny." "Why are you talking to them like that?"

Distraction: If somebody is being rude to a friend, cut off the bully by telling a random

story and redirect the conversation.

Delegate: Talk to someone with presumably more social power than you about it. This can be an upperclassman, an influential peer or advisor. You can talk about strategy together and thus figure out the best way to disrupt the bullying.

Delay: Delay is where you check in with the victim of the incident after it has occurred to see if you can do anything to help them. Maybe you weren't there when the incident happened, but you see someone looking really upset walking down the street. Simply saying "Hey, are you okay? Can I do anything?" again illustrates that they are not alone and that you care about those in your community. When someone is telling you a story about an injustice that happened to them, a simple "I'm so sorry that happened to you" can speak leaps and bounds about supporting each other's struggles.

- Don't assume that this is a private matter between the bully and the victim. Incidents of bullying, especially those that are frequent, are often not because of personal reasons;
- Don't combat violence with violence. It takes a lot of courage for someone to step up on behalf of a bullied person. However, don't use insults or physical violence to defend the victim. Now is not the time to show off. You will most likely only make it harder for the victim
- If you feel that this is none of your business, put yourself in the victim's shoes. Bullying can cause severe anxiety, depression, anger, and frustration in a person, and can turn their life into a nightmare. You wouldn't want to feel that way
- You should never step in to protect a bullied victim if it might also put your own safety at risk. If this is the case, you should talk to an advisor, Greek Affairs staff, administrator or counselor on campus if the problem keeps happening. Be sure to ask if you can speak to them in private, in case you are afraid of being the next target for bullies. Even if you are not directly stopping the bullying, by taking action and going to seek outside help, you are taking steps away from being a bystander.

Be a Mentor

Not every collegiate faces bullying, but that doesn't mean you can't help in the fight against mean girls. "You probably have a young friend in your life. Be a role model for them by talking about what nice really looks like," If you're older, reach out to a freshman who might be having difficulty finding a nice group of friends.

Resources on Campus for Victims of Hazing & Bullying

UNL Counseling and Psychological Services (CAPS)| (402) 472-7450
health.unl.edu/caps M-F 8am-5pm. Call for a 10-15 minute initial phone appointment.

LGBTQA Resource Center Liaison| Dr. Scott Winrow swinrow2@unl.edu

UNL Counseling and School Psychology Clinic| (402) 472-1152
Offering affordable, confidential counseling for students and community members.

UNL Psychological Consultation Center (PCC) | (402) 472-2351
Offering affordable, confidential counseling for students and community members.

UNL Women's Center| (402) 472-9428
Offering affordable, confidential counseling for women and men students. Call the counseling coordinator for more information or to schedule an appointment.

What is UNL's Policies on Hazing & Bullying?

Student Code of Conduct

Physical abuse, verbal abuse, threats, intimidation, harassment, coercion, and/or other conduct that threatens or unreasonably endangers the mental or physical health, safety or reputation of any person or oneself, including any such conduct achieved through means of social media or any other means of electronic communication.

Attempted or actual theft of and/or damage to property of the University or property of a member of the University community on or off campus.

Hazing, defined as any activity by which a person intentionally or recklessly endangers the physical or mental health or safety of an individual for the purpose of initiation into, admission into, affiliation with, or continued membership with any student organization. Such hazing activity shall include, but not be limited to, whipping, beating, branding, forced and prolonged calisthenics, prolonged exposure to elements, forced consumption of any food, liquor, beverage, drug or harmful substance not generally intended for human consumption, prolonged sleep deprivation, or any brutal treatment of the performance of any act which endanger the physical or mental health or safety of any person.

Improper Initiation Rituals, more specifically described as, intentionally adopting or implementing a practice of activity for the purpose of initiation, admission into, affiliation with, or as a condition for continued membership in a group or RSO that requires exertion or deprivation or embarrassment over a sustained period of time that can reasonably be expected to interfere with a student's academic performance, or if publicly known could reasonably be expected to diminish the reputation of the group, RSO, or the University, whether within or outside of the University. Any practice or activity that is not publicly advertised in advance of its implementation shall be presumed to violate this section and the group or RSO shall have the burden of showing

that its practice or activity does not violate this section. The express or implied consent of the victim will not be a defense.

**Panhellenic Association, University of Nebraska Lincoln
PHA Bylaws**

Article XII. Hazing

Per the unanimous agreements, the National Panhellenic Conference supports all efforts to eliminate hazing. All forms of hazing shall be banded.

**Interfraternity Council, University of Nebraska-Lincoln
IFC Bylaws**

ARTICLE V. Hazing

SECTION 1 - Definition of Hazing

A. The University of Nebraska-Lincoln defines hazing as “any activity by an organization or by a member of an organization in which a member, prospective member, pledge or associate of the organization is subjected to acts which cause harm or create the risk of harm to the physical or mental health of the member, prospective member, or pledge. Hazing includes, but is not limited to, any act or activity which causes or might reasonably be expected to cause fear or intimidation, extended deprivation of sleep or rest, forced consumption of any substance, physical exhaustion, physical harm (beating, boarding, paddling, branding or exposure to weather), or damage to property” (Student Code of Conduct, Page 6, Definition 2.6). The University also stipulates that, “The intent of any person engaging in hazing activity or the consent or cooperation of any person who is a victim of hazing will not constitute a defense to an allegation of misconduct for hazing” (Student Code of Conduct, Page 8, Section 4.21)

SECTION 2 - All pledge activities and pre-initiation activities shall be conducted in accordance with the University’s policy on hazing and abide by the principles of the Student Code of Conduct.

SECTION 3 - Any individual member of a fraternity or any fraternity found to be in violation of the policy and definition regarding hazing will be subject to the penalties outlined in the Interfraternity Council by laws as applied by the IFC Executive Committee.

SECTION 4 - Any individual member of a fraternity or any fraternity found to be in violation of the policy and definition regarding hazing shall also be subject to the disciplinary proceedings enumerated in the University of Nebraska-Lincoln Student Code of Conduct.

SECTION 5 - Any incidence of hazing shall be directly reported to the Director of Greek Affairs. Failure to report an incidence of hazing will be an aggravating factor in deliberations regarding discipline for violation of the policy.

Organizations to Combat Hazing & Bullying

Empowerment Initiative-UNL

The nonprofit Empowerment Initiative supports translational research designed to foster positive, accepting communities free from bullying and other negative behaviors. Studies conducted through the Empowerment Initiative focus on identifying and addressing the complex personal, social and cultural factors underlying such behaviors, thereby advancing practical solutions to promote healthy relationships within families, schools and communities.

StopHazing

The mission of StopHazing is to promote safe school, campus and organizational climates through research, information sharing and the development of data-driven strategies for hazing prevention. HazingPrevention.Org is a national organization dedicated to empowering people to prevent hazing, by providing education and resources, and building partnerships with others. Major initiatives of the organization include National Hazing Prevention Week™, the Novak Institute for Hazing Prevention™, and educational courses that touch the lives of thousands of individuals, organizations, campuses and communities.

Mean Stinks

Mean Stinks is a campaign from Secret deodorant, created to address the need for a community where girls who have been bullied can talk about their experiences. Videos from celebrities like Amber Riley and a collection of different tools help create a community for support. Simmons suggests Mean Stinks for college girls “looking for a community.”

We Stop Hate

At only 17, Emily-Anne Rigal is the founder of We Stop Hate, a site that “raises self-esteem and, as a result, combats bullying.” What originally started as a place for teens to post YouTube videos has grown to be a national sensation. This past summer, Rigal won a TeenNick HALO Award, presented to her by Lady Gaga. We Stop Hate uses digital media (everything from inspirational pictures to YouTube videos) to show how others have overcome insecurities.

References

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<http://nobullying.com/bullying-in-college/>

<http://www.hercampus.com/health/mental-health/truth-about-bullying-college>

<http://www.eyesonbullying.org/index.html>

<http://stepupprogram.org/topics/hazing/>

http://standagainstabullying.org/page/laws_nebraska

<http://www.stophazing.org>

<http://stuafs.unl.edu/DeanofStudents/Student%20Code%20of%20Conduct%20May%20Rev%202014%20a.pdf>